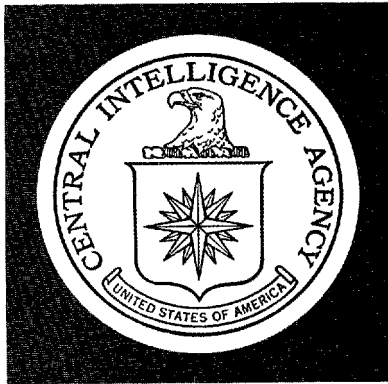


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State Dept. review completed

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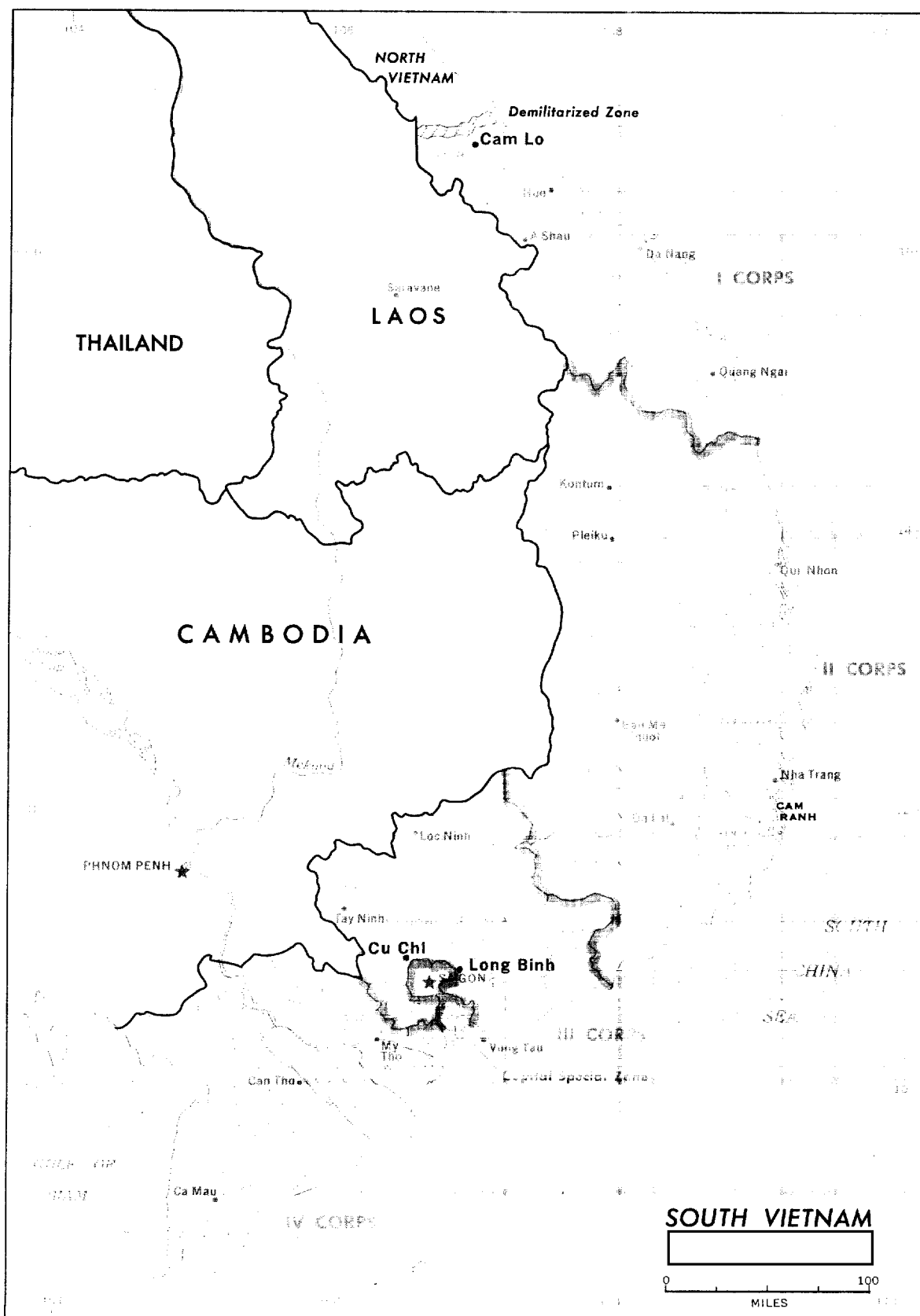


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[Vietnam: Small ground clashes and widely scattered enemy mortar attacks against allied facilities continued on 8-9 December.

In I Corps, a US Marine patrol lost three killed and nine wounded when hit by heavy enemy fire west of Cam Lo in northern Quang Tri Province. On the coast of II Corps, two engagements cost the Communists 19 killed, while allied patrols killed 28 enemy in the provinces of III Corps. In the delta, a Viet Cong battalion has killed 18 allied troops in a continuing action which has cost the enemy nine killed so far.

The most significant Communist shellings were in III Corps, where the enemy launched rocket attacks at US Army headquarters facilities at Long Binh and Cu Chi, killing three Americans and wounding eight. The enemy also conducted mortar attacks in widely separated areas of I and II Corps. [REDACTED]

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Okinawa: Chobo Yara, the new leftist chief executive, has warned US authorities to expect popular agitation and extralegal measures by antibase elements who want US B-52s removed from the island.

Yara, who took office on 1 December, made a forceful presentation last week to the US civil administrator, arguing for early removal of the bombers. He stressed the inflamed public sentiment that has resulted from the crash of a B-52 last month.

Yara also said he is concerned about alleged radioactive contamination of Ryukyuan harbors by US nuclear submarines and suggested that a joint US-Japanese survey of Okinawan port facilities may be in order.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Tokyo may feel compelled to make a low-keyed gesture, such as asking the US to consider withdrawal of the bombers.

Although Yara can be expected to continue making representations to US and Japanese officials for the removal of the B-52s, he will probably work to contain violent demonstrations on base issues.

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Japan: The government will probably face new demands for a reduction in the number of US bases in Japan during the extraordinary Diet session that begins today.

The increasingly influential Komeito (Clean Government Party) has just published the first section of a critical study of US bases. In calling for fewer bases, the study claims that inhabitants near a majority of the bases desire a return of the facilities and that a third of the bases are hazards to public safety. The survey's conclusions fit neatly into Komeito's stated policy that the US-Japan security treaty, although necessary now, should be gradually phased out.

The release of the study just before the special Diet session, called to approve a supplementary budget, gives opposition parties new ammunition to use against the government. Japanese press commentary on the study has been extensive and generally favorable. Newspapers have pointed out that this is the first time such an extensive survey has been conducted by a Japanese party, and have already criticized the government for not undertaking such a study. Japanese Government spokesmen have responded [redacted] that the study emphasizes local feelings at the expense of over-all national security interests.

The study clearly is part of Komeito's continuing effort to exploit what the party sees as a consensus of Japanese public opinion on the base issue. Issuance of the report may also be a result of intraparty pressure on the Komeito leadership to adopt a more aggressive and critical attitude toward US-Japanese relations in general and the base issue in particular. [redacted]

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Norway: The Parliament has approved an augmented defense budget including a controversial special appropriation for increased military preparedness in the north.

Much of the special appropriation of \$14 million will be used to cover the cost of shifting conscripts to the north for their obligatory service. During the brief debate last week, elements in both the government and opposition parties displayed uneasiness about stiffening Norway's posture near the Soviet border. In the final vote, however, only the two representatives of the left-wing Socialist People's Party opposed the government's measure.

A majority of the opposition Labor Party, including most of the representatives from north Norway, privately opposed the increase as "provocative," and expressed fears that the Soviets might be tempted to take measures which would further increase tensions in the area. The Labor leadership discouraged debate for fear that the party's internal divisions would become obvious and be exploited in the 1969 parliamentary elections. Labor, forced out in 1965 after 30 years in power, is anxious to regain control of the government from the center-right coalition.

The whole question of Norway's military preparedness in the north is politically explosive. Although the government has become inured to Soviet propaganda attacks on Oslo's role in NATO, it faces a more serious danger from disaffection within the coalition over defense policy. The Liberal Party, in particular, might be tempted to use the issue to attack Conservative Defense Minister Tidemand in order to assure the support of its pacifist wing in the elections next year.

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East - West Germany: The East and West Germans have agreed to expand interzonal trade despite political obstacles.

Concessions by Bonn have not been matched by Pankow. Bonn has agreed to pay \$30 million in retroactive petroleum subsidies, in return for which East Germany will resume delivery of petroleum products stopped in 1967 because of this unresolved issue. Both sides have agreed to postpone indefinitely cash settlement of trade accounts and to increase the "swing," or maximum permitted imbalance, in trade. No decision was reached on the holding of proposed ministerial-level talks.

West German Economics Minister Schiller has implied that he expects the agreement to end East German harassment of traffic to and from Berlin. The East Germans, however, have substantially reduced their dependence on West Germany for important commodities and are under little economic pressure to be cooperative on this issue.

East Germany, nevertheless, is happy to reap the economic benefits of the accord, and may view the agreement as furthering its goal of receiving official recognition from Bonn.

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NOTES

USSR: The party central committee met yesterday and attended to the routine business of passing on the draft economic plan and budget for 1969. These drafts will be given final approval at the Supreme Soviet session which opens today. The plenum also heard a speech by General Secretary Brezhnev, which presumably included some comments on foreign affairs, although the TASS announcement did not reveal the subject matter. [REDACTED]

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Rumania - East Germany: Rumanian Foreign Minister Manescu left yesterday for an official visit to East Germany. Political and trade questions probably will be discussed, but no agenda has been announced. Relations between the two countries, frosty since Bucharest established diplomatic ties with Bonn in 1967, deteriorated further when Rumania criticized the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia. Manescu's visit reflects some success for Pankow's recent efforts to mend fences in Eastern Europe and also demonstrates Bucharest's desire to get along with its Warsaw Pact allies despite continuing differences. [REDACTED]

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